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ABSTRACT

Intended for adaptation by teachers to suit their students' and their own strengths, this guide is a series of thematic units intended to encourage meaningful language use in an enjoyable and serious atmosphere in the ninth grade classroom. The guide includes many reading and writing activities that can be used in both the specific contexts in which they are suggested and at other points during the six weeks of the program. The guide's first two units, "Biographies: Writing about Each Other" and "Timelines: Writing about Ourselves," involve extensive prewriting activities leading to more formal pieces of writing, in the first instance about a classmate's life and in the second, about a significant incident in the student's own life. The third and fourth units, "Family and Culture: A Reading and Writing Unit" and "Stories about School: A Reading and Writing Unit," integrate reading and writing around themes felt to be meaningful to students. The fifth section, "Preparing for High School," focuses more directly on the students' expectations and concerns about starting high school, moving to actual investigations of aspects of their new schools. Finally, in the sixth section, "Preparing a Publication," students have the opportunity to look back over the many pieces of writing they have produced during the five weeks and to choose one to work on further and prepare for publication in a class magazine. (SR)

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INSTITUTE FOR CAREER EXPLORATION

Summer 1989

WRITING

A Teacher's Guide

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A Note To Participating Teachers

This curriculum material is meant to be suggestive. Our assumption is that individual teachers will know their own students and their own strengths and will adapt what we have developed accordingly. Our goal was to plan a series of thematic units that would encourage meaningful language use in an enjoyable and serious atmosphere. We have included many reading and writing activities that can be used in both the specific contexts in which they're suggested and at other points during the six weeks of the program.

We have tried to plan units of lessons that are appropriate in both content and approach for incoming ninth grade students. We have organized these plans into weekly thematic units, all of which, we hope, are relevant to students' lives. We have planned activities within these units that encourage active, engaged learning. The first two units, **Biographies: Writing about Each Other** and **Timelines: Writing About Ourselves** involve extensive prewriting activities leading to more formal pieces of writing, in the first instance about a classmate's life and in the second, about a significant incident in the student's own life. The third and fourth units, **Family and Culture: A Reading and Writing Unit** and **Stories About School: A Reading and Writing Unit** integrate reading and writing around themes that we felt would be meaningful to students. The fifth week, **Preparing for High School** focuses more directly on the students' expectations and concerns about starting high school, moving to actual investigations of aspects of their new schools. Finally, during Week 6, **Preparing A Publication**, students will have an opportunity to look back over the many pieces of writing they have produced during the five weeks and to choose one to work on further and prepare for publication in a class magazine. We recommend that students keep folders of all their writing during the course of the program so that this final activity will be easier to manage.

Although we are responsible for all the lessons in this guide, we have been informed and influenced by many of our colleagues at the New York City Writing Project. We would like to acknowledge their contribution to this curriculum.

We would greatly appreciate your reactions to this material. What worked? What suggestions do you have for making it more usable for teachers, more accessible and interesting to students? Please let us know.

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WEEK 1

BIOGRAPHIES: WRITING ABOUT EACH OTHER OVERVIEW

Introduction: The purpose of this unit is to create a sense of community among a new group of students and to provide them with the opportunity to become better acquainted with their classmates. They will engage in a series of activities that prepare them to interview each other, and to write up the interviews as biographies. As a culminating activity, students will introduce each other to the class.

Suggested Weekly Calendar:

Day 1: Generating Interview Questions

Day 2: Preparing For and Beginning the Interviews

Day 3: Moving From Interviews to Biographies

Day 4: Adding New Information

Day 5: Introducing Each Other to the Class

WEEK 1

BIOGRAPHIES: WRITING ABOUT EACH OTHER

Day 1: Generating Interview Questions

1. Introductions - You may want to begin this first class with an introductory game. One possibility is to ask students to introduce themselves with an adjective that describes them and which begins with the first letter of their first name, i.e. Jealous Jane.
2. Elicit from students what an interview is and discuss how they might use interviews to get to know each other. Explain that they will be interviewing each other in pairs with the goal of writing a biography about their partners.
3. Ask students to write, in the form of questions, five things they would like to know about each other. Generate a group list on the board. (Eliminate questions that allow for only a yes/no answer.)
4. Now that students have a long list of interview questions, discuss how to categorize them. Some students may have difficulty categorizing questions. You may want to model this process for the class by asking them which questions seem to go together. Initially, you may want to supply the category and allow students to fill in the questions. For example, which questions are related to school? Which ones are related to family?
5. Elicit from students the order in which they think these questions should be asked.
6. Ask each student to choose the questions he or she wants to use and give them time to copy them. You may want students to use an index card for each question or regular composition paper, instructing students to skip several lines between questions so there will be room for the response.

WEEK 1

BIOGRAPHIES: WRITING ABOUT EACH OTHER

Day 2: Preparing For and Beginning the Interview

1. Invite students to talk about the interview process. Students can respond in writing to several of the questions below, and shared responses can be used to generate discussion.

- a) What do you think will be most difficult about interviewing your partner?
- b) What do you think will be easy about doing interviews?
- c) How can you help your partner feel comfortable?
- d) What should you do if you don't understand something your partner tells you?
- e) How can you encourage your partner to talk more?

2. Ask for a volunteer and conduct a mock interview with the student interviewing you. Since some students may be unfamiliar with interviewing, this has a dual purpose. When the volunteer asks you questions, the whole class will have an opportunity to practice note-taking. You will also have the opportunity to make points about the interview process including the following:

- the importance of being flexible - it's okay to deviate from the list of questions in order to pursue an interesting point.
- the importance of follow-up questions - if the interviewer asks how many siblings you have, he or she should follow up with questions about sex, names, age, etc.
- the importance of developing a "short-hand" - it's not necessary to take down every word; just take down the main idea.

3. When it's time for students to interview each other, arrange them in pairs. You may want to assign pairs, or let students choose their own partners. Students should decide who will be student A and who will be Student B. Then, in the remaining time, Student A interviews student B.

4. If time remains, ask students to respond in writing to any of the following questions:

- a) How did you feel during the interview?
- b) What did you like about it? What was easy?
- c) What was difficult about it?

Invite students to share their responses and discuss.

Note: If a camera is available, while students work in pairs, move around the room taking pictures of them. If a camera is not available, you may want to ask students to bring in their own pictures. When students write the final drafts of their interviews, pictures and interviews can be use to decorate the room or bulletin board.

WEEK 1

BIOGRAPHIES: WRITING ABOUT EACH OTHER

Day 3: Moving From Interviews to Biographies

1. If you didn't already do so, discuss what it was like to do the interviews. (See yesterday's lesson.)

2. Ask students to switch roles and allow time for Student B to interview Student A.

3. Now that students have a set of notes, it is time for them to begin writing up their interviews. Since moving from notes to composition may be difficult for some students, you may want to distribute copies of "Evander Student..." (see attached) to help students see how they can turn their interviews into "biographies."

4. Read article with the class. Elicit that the writer got the information for this article from an interview. Point out how this article is different from their set of notes: use of sentences instead of key words, paragraphs; catchy introduction, use of direct quotations, powerful ending or conclusion.

5. Students begin to write up a "biography" of their partner. Remind them that their purpose is to introduce their partner to the class using information from the interview. Encourage them to write without being concerned with spelling, grammar, etc. at this point.

WEEK 1

BIOGRAPHIES: WRITING ABOUT EACH OTHER

Day 4: Adding New Information

1. If student's haven't finished their first drafts, allow for some writing time at the beginning of the period.

2. When students are finished writing, partners should read each other's compositions to check for accuracy and appropriateness in presenting each other to the class.

Instruct students to exchange papers and address the following questions:

- a) Is the information in the biography about you correct?
- b) Is there anything you want your interviewer to change?
- c) Is there anything else you want the writer to add?
- d) Is there anything you think should be deleted? Show the writer.

Allow time for the students to make revision notes on their composition.

3. Ask each student to exchange papers with a different student - a student who will be reading the paper for the first time. This third party should read the piece in order to help the writer add pertinent information. He or she will respond to the following question: What would you like to hear more about?

4. The writer now needs time to gather more information. Once again, working in the original pairs, students ask each other questions and add new information to their biographies.

5. You may want to spend some time working on powerful introductions. Suggest that students begin their writing in one of the following ways:

- with a question
- with something very special about the person
- with a controversial statement

6. Students incorporate new information into a final draft.

WEEK 1

BIOGRAPHIES: WRITING ABOUT EACH OTHER

Day 5: Introducing Each Other to the Class

1. If necessary, allow writing time for students to finish the final drafts of their biographies.
2. The culminating activity in this unit is for pairs of students to introduce each other to the rest of the class. Students may choose to read their biographies, or, using the information gathered, just talk about their partners. Invite one pair at a time to the front of the room to introduce each other. (Students will probably need time to rehearse for this activity.)
3. When everyone has read, ask student to do a piece of writing about the entire activity: What did you like about doing interviews and writing biographies?
4. Share responses.

WEEK 2

TIMELINES: STORIES ABOUT OURSELVES OVERVIEW

Introduction: The purpose of this unit is to provide students with an opportunity to write about their own lives and experiences and, through carefully structured activities, to enable them to help each other tell lively, coherent stories about their lives. Although we have suggested timelines as an activity to generate this writing, many other activities could be used to help students find events in their own lives on which to focus their writing. Whatever the generative activity, it is important that students choose their own topics for this writing so that they will be invested in what they are writing.

Suggested Weekly Calendar:

Day 1: Creating Timelines

Day 2: Sharing Timelines in Pairs/Choosing An Event

Day 3: Writing Workshop/Preparing for Revision

Day 4: Peer Response Groups

Day 5: Sharing and Celebrating Writing

WEEK 2

TIMELINES: STORIES ABOUT OURSELVES

Day 1: Creating Timelines

1. Elicit what a timeline is-- students will probably know from social studies that they usually show historical events in chronological order. Explain that they will be creating personal timelines which will document events in their lives in chronological order. These timelines will eventually lead to a piece of writing.

2. Model your personal timeline on the board. (It's best to prepare this beforehand so that it doesn't take too long.) A sample timeline is attached. Give students an opportunity to ask questions (How did you break your leg? etc.)

3. Elicit a list of the **types** of events that you included in order to give students ideas for their own timelines. This list might include:

work
homes/moves
school
births
deaths
accidents
operations
friendships
travel
weddings
breakups
etc.

4. Distribute blank white paper and help students set up their timelines. They can use a line for each year of their lives or a line for their age each year. You may want to distribute paper with a timeline already on it for them to fill in.

5. Allow students to work on their timelines as you circulate and encourage them to remember significant and memorable events in their lives (these can be external events-- my sister was born, or internal events-- we moved to New York and I realized we'd never live in Puerto Rico again).

6. Invite students to ask their parents/families for missing dates and information to add to their timelines.

WEEK 2

TIMELINES: WRITING ABOUT OURSELVES

Day 2: Sharing Timelines/Choosing An Event

1. Give students time to add information gathered from families. Bring in markers and/or colored pencils and invite students to decorate their timelines.
2. Remind students about how they asked you questions about your timeline. Now that they're finished with theirs, provide them with the opportunity to talk with a partner about the events listed on the timeline.
3. As a large group, discuss what they noticed in each other's timelines. Were they similar? Very different? Did you get any new ideas for yours? Give them time to add events to their timelines.
4. Now that they've discussed their timelines, ask students to look at them carefully and with a pencil make a mark next to **three** events that they think would be interesting to write about or explore further.
5. Now, ask them to choose one of the three and to write it at the top of a clean page of paper.
6. Ask students to write as much as they can remember about the event they have chosen. Tell them **not** to worry yet about how it's written, but to get as much down on paper as they can. Once students are settled into writing, write a draft of your own based on an event in your timeline. You might choose to write on a rexograph stencil so that you can make the copies you'll need for tomorrow easily.

WEEK 2

TIMELINES: WRITING ABOUT OURSELVES **Day 3: Writing Workshop/Preparing for Revision**

1. Refocus the group by asking students to say what the topic of their writing is and how they're doing so far. They can either write the answer to this first and then talk about it, or just talk about it.

2. Ask students a series of questions, that they answer in writing, to help them see new ways to approach the piece they've begun. These might include:

- Why is this event important to you?
- Who is important to this story? Why?
- What did you learn (about yourself/others) during or from the event you describe?
- What did you leave out? What haven't you said yet that's important to this story?

3. Using these new notes, students can work on their writing during class. You should serve as a facilitator, helping and encouraging students to develop their writing.

4. Distribute copies of a first draft of a piece of writing you've done based on an event from your timeline and read it aloud to the class. Also distribute a Peer Response Sheet (see sample copy attached) and ask the students to help you make your writing more meaningful for readers by responding genuinely and carefully to the questions on the sheet. Some of the students' responses to each question should be heard aloud. (The purpose of this activity is to model what students will do in groups Day 4. You should make changes in your writing, based on students' suggestions, for the next class.)

WEEK 2

TIMELINES: STORIES ABOUT OURSELVES

Day 4: Peer Response Groups

1. Students work in groups of four (you may want to help form these groups or have students form their own groups. It may even be more manageable to have students work in pairs or groups of three.) Each student gets three Peer Response Sheets, one for each member of the group. Each student should read his or her piece **aloud**, twice if necessary, and the other group members should respond in writing on a Peer Response Sheet. Each group member should receive a completed Peer Response Sheet from each member of the group. **Note:** This activity may be difficult for students. You should move from group to group, encouraging students to help each other and stay on task.

2. Large group discussion: how did it go?

3. Distribute a second draft of your own writing (at least partially based on changes suggested by comments made by students the day before) and ask students to notice and jot down all the changes you made and, if possible, to guess why. Invite students to read and discuss these notes.

4. Students write for a few minutes in response to: What changes can you make in your writing based on what your group members wrote and on your own ideas? Hear some of these.

5. Students work on their writing, making changes, again with encouragement and help from you.

WEEK 2

TIMELINES: STORIES ABOUT OURSELVES

Day 5: Sharing and Celebrating Writing

1. Give students time to reread and add final touches to their writing. Ask them to write in response to the following two questions: What do you think you did well in this paper/what do you like? What are you unsatisfied with? Hear some of these.

2. Arrange chairs in a circle and ask students to choose from the part they like best in their writing to read to the whole class. Each student (and you) read as much or as little of their paper as they choose. This serves as a culminating and celebratory activity. You might want to talk, as a group, about what some of the overlapping themes and topics were in the writing. If time allows, you might hear some of the pieces in their entirety.

WEEK 3

FAMILY AND CULTURE: A READING AND WRITING UNIT OVERVIEW

Introduction: The purpose of this unit is to use varied reading and writing activities to explore the cultural diversity of the students in your classroom as well as the often complicated feelings that may accompany living with two cultures here in New York. We believe it is important to discuss and acknowledge in school the richness of our students' home and community lives. The poem, "The Tropics of New York" by Claude McKay, the chapter "Uncle Claudio" from El Bronx Remembered by Nicholasa Mohr and the story, "Tall Woman and the Dine," by Jessie Alford Nunn deal in varying ways with the struggle of trying to maintain one's native culture while adapting to that of a new home. The readings are meant to be enjoyed as literature and as a way to get students to talk and write about aspects of their own cultural backgrounds. At all times students should be given the choice of how much they want to reveal, since family and culture can be sensitive and private.

Suggested Weekly Calendar:

Day 1: Balancing The Old and The New/"The Tropics in New York"

Day 2: Balancing The Old and The New/"Uncle Claudio"

Day 3: Appreciating Difference/"Tall Woman and the Dine"

Day 4: Cultural Inheritance/Writing About a Family Member

Day 5: Celebrating Diversity/Show and Tell or Writing from Photographs

WEEK 3

FAMILY AND CULTURE: A READING AND WRITING UNIT **Day 1: Balancing The Old and The New/"The Tropics In New York"**

1. Ask students orally:

- Who was born outside New York? Outside the U.S?
- Whose parents were born outside N.Y.? U.S.?
- Whose grandparents were born outside N.Y.? U.S.?
- Why did you/they come here?

2. Ask students to write informally about the following two questions:

- What do you remember yourself or what have you heard family members say about "back home"? Students whose families have lived in New York for three generations can write about stories they have heard about "the old days."
- How do you feel about these stories?

Hear responses to both these questions.

3. Distribute poem "The Tropics in New York" by Claude McKay (copy attached). Ask students to read the poem once silently. Then read the poem once and finally, ask a student to read it again.

4. Ask students to underline a line in the poem that they like. Hear everyone's line. Now, ask students to underline a line in the poem that they don't understand. Hear these lines.

5. Discuss the poem. Some suggested questions for discussion are:

- How do you think the writer feels about living in New York?
- How do you think the writer feels about his homeland?
- What is the tone or the feeling of this poem?
- What makes it hard to live in a new place?
- Do you think that being an "American" means that you have to break with your native language and

culture?

- What experiences have you had with missing something from another place?

6. Ask students to list all the things they can think of that make New York a difficult place to live. Then ask them to list all the things they can think of that make New York a good place to live.

7. Groups of four students should share these lists and make one group list for each category. Groups then report back and the class makes one list on the board.

8. If there's time, in preparation for tomorrow's story and discussion, ask students to write a letter to someone they know who doesn't live in New York, convincing them to move here or to stay away or telling them how New York is different from where they live.

WEEK 3

FAMILY AND CULTURE: A READING AND WRITING UNIT

Day 2: Balancing The Old and The New/"Uncle Claudio"

1. Hear some of the letters written yesterday, convincing friends or relatives to come to New York, or to stay away. Notice together the themes that emerge (i.e., lots of different kinds of people might appear in either type of letter, more jobs than at "home"/lack of good job opportunities, racism, etc.)
2. Distribute "Uncle Claudio", which is a chapter from El Bronx Remembered by Nicholosa Mohr. Depending on the group and how comfortable they are with reading, read the story to them, have them read it aloud, or have them read it silently. Discussion might focus on the following questions:
 - What are some of the changes people in this story have experienced coming to the the United States from another place and culture?
 - What are some of the attitudes expressed by people in the story toward these changes?
3. Once again, ask students to write a letter, this time to Uncle Claudio, telling him whether or not they agree with his decision to return to Puerto Rico. Encourage them to use specific incidents mentioned in the story as well as the information the class came up with in their lists about New York.
4. In hearing letters that represent each side, encourage students to recognize that these are complicated and difficult issues.

WEEK 3

FAMILY AND CULTURE: A READING AND WRITING UNIT

Day 3: Appreciating Difference/"Tall Woman and the Dine"

1. As a pre-reading activity ask students to write for a few minutes about a time a parent/grandparent/guardian embarrassed them because the parent was "different." Hear some of these.

2. Distribute "Tall Woman and the Dine" (copy attached). Read aloud to the class to the end of third paragraph on page three ("happy future"). At this point ask students to write about the two main characters by finishing the sentence starters:

-- The grandmother in this story...

-- The young girl in this story...

Hear responses to each and list on board. This shared analysis of the story so far will encourage students to finish the story on their own.

3. When everyone has finished the story, ask students to write two questions they have about any aspect of the story. In pairs or groups of three have them try to answer them. As a large group, talk about the story, using student questions and tentative answers as a jumping off point.

4. Ask students to pretend that they are Tazbah and to write a diary entry about what has occurred in the story and how she has changed. Ask them to consider: what might she say about how her attitude towards her grandmother has changed? What has she learned? How does she feel?

5. Hear some diary entries.

WEEK 3

FAMILY AND CULTURE: A READING AND WRITING UNIT

Day 4: Cultural Inheritance/Writing about a Family Member

1. Taking into consideration the qualities that Tazbah came to appreciate in her grandmother, ask students to choose a family member or an older person who isn't related to them but who is important to them, and who they have learned from or admired. Encourage them to write about the person's characteristics as well as the relationship.

Note: This is meant to be a culminating activity, using ideas generated from the readings and discussions. Remind students, individually and as a group, to think and write about aspects of culture and language when describing the person they have selected. This should be a workshop environment, with you helping individual students as they need it.

2. Share writing.

3. Towards the end of the period, ask students, for the following day, to bring to class an object which represents some aspect of their cultural background. This can include music, art, clothing, food, books, documents, maps etc. Discuss possibilities as a group and possibly, before leaving, ask each student what they are considering bringing in. If students can't think of anything that represents their cultural or ethnic background, they can bring something that is representative of their family's interests and life. Tell them they will be asked to present this object to the class and to tell of its significance.

Another possibility is to ask students to bring in old family photographs. If you choose to do this, begin asking students to bring in photos early in the week.

WEEK 3

FAMILY AND CULTURE: A READING AND WRITING UNIT

Day 5: Celebrating Diversity/Show and Tell or Writing from Photographs

If students have brought in objects:

1. Ask students to write for a few minutes: What did you bring in? Why did you choose it? What is its significance to you?
2. Give students time to prepare a very short talk about their objects for the rest of the class. Go around the room and hear from each person.
3. Display objects on desks and have students walk around room and look at them.
4. To close this activity ask students to write to other students telling them what they learned from the presentation that they didn't know before OR ask everyone to write more generally about something they learned about a classmate's cultural background that they found particularly interesting.

If students have brought in photographs:

1. Ask student to choose one person in the photograph they have brought in and to write an interior monologue as though they are that person telling something about him or herself. Encourage them to use information they know about the person and what they imagine about the person too. Hear some of these.
2. In pairs, have students read their monologues to each other as a way of introducing the person they have chosen to be. Now, ask students to write dialogues **between** the two people in their photographs. What might they say to each other about their lives? About the time and place in which they live? Hear some of these.

WEEK 4

STORIES ABOUT SCHOOL: A READING AND WRITING UNIT OVERVIEW

Introduction: The purpose of this unit is to allow students to reflect on the positive and negative experiences they've had in school and share these experiences with each other through writing and discussion. Students will also read about, write about and discuss the experiences of two fictional characters, Laurie, in the story "Charles," by Shirley Jackson, and Dave, in the story "Split Cherry Tree," by Jesse Stuart. The culminating activity will be for students to write a letter to a character or a person in their lives, focusing on their feelings about school.

Suggested Weekly Calendar:

Day 1: Positive and Negative Experiences With School

Day 2: Writing Workshop

Day 3: Adjusting to School/"Charles"

Day 4: Life Lessons Learned in School/"Split Cherry Tree"

Day 5: Letters About School

WEEK 4

STORIES ABOUT SCHOOL: A READING AND WRITING UNIT

Day 1: Positive and Negative Experiences With School

1. Ask students a series of exploratory questions about school. Give them time after each question to respond in writing. Inform them that they will be sharing this with the class. You may choose several of the questions below, or create your own.
 - a. Write down all the facts you know about school.
 - b. What do you like about school?
 - c. What do you dislike about school?
 - d. What was school like 100 years ago?
 - e. What will school be like in the year 2000?
2. Invite students to share their responses to these questions with the class. This activity allows students to explore their feelings about school and share them with each other.
3. Continue discussion of school, this time focusing on the personal experiences the students have had. Ask students to make a list of the good experiences they have had in school. Follow this with a list of their bad school experiences.
4. In groups of 4, ask students to share their lists and generate one group list of good experiences and one group list of bad experiences.
5. As each group shares its list with the class, create two long lists of positive and negative experiences on the board.
6. Using these lists, help students generalize from their particular, specific experiences to more general ones - what are the ingredients of positive and negative school experiences?. (The ingredients of a positive experiences may be: success, popularity, etc. The ingredients of a negative experience may be: failure, exclusion, embarrassment.)
7. Tell students that they will be writing stories about a positive or negative school experience. Invite them to look over the lists on the board to help find a topic. Go around the room and ask students to state their topics. Students who have not yet chosen topics might be encouraged by another student's choice.

WEEK 4

STORIES ABOUT SCHOOL: A READING AND WRITING UNIT

Day 2: Writing Workshop

1. Before beginning the writing about positive and negative school experiences, ask students if anyone wants to change her/his topic. Give students the opportunity to share their new topics with the class and the explain why they made the shift.
2. Before the actual writing occurs, allow students to use talk as a means of conjuring up the details of their stories. Students "tell" their stories in pairs. Instruct the "narrator" to speak for three minutes, non-stop, telling everything he or she remembers about this experience. The "listener" is not allowed to talk, interrupt, or ask questions. When the three minutes are up, invite the "listener" to ask questions, and allow time for a discussion. Reverse roles and repeat the process.
3. As a large group, discuss the process of sharing stories in pairs. You may want to use the following questions to guide this discussion:
 - a) What was easy/difficult about telling about this story?
 - b) Were you surprised by anything you remembered? What?
 - c) Who were the important people in your story?
4. Allow the remaining class time for writing. Ask students to write as much as they can remember about this experience, including such details as time, place, and important people.
5. If time allows at the end of the period, ask for volunteers to share their stories with the class.

WEEK 4

STORIES ABOUT SCHOOL: A READING AND WRITING UNIT

Day 3: Adjusting to School/"Charles"

1. Invite students who didn't get a chance to read yesterday to share their stories with the class.
2. Read the story "Charles," by Shirley Jackson, aloud to the class. You may want to distribute a copy so they can read along, or, just ask them to listen as you read. In either case, stop at intervals to ask students questions about the story. You may want to ask comprehension questions to see if they understand, or ask them to predict what they think will happen next.
3. When you've finished reading, ask students to write their reaction to "Charles." You may want to invite them to choose from the following sentence starters to begin their writing in order to encourage a personal response rather than a summary:
 - I was surprised when. . .
 - I don't understand . . .
 - I realized. . .
 - This reminds me of. . .
4. Hear responses as a way of generating a class discussion about the story.
5. Ask students to predict what they think happened after the story ended. The story ends with a dialogue between Laurie's mother and Laurie's teacher. What would that dialogue sound like if it were to continue? What would they talk about? Invite volunteers to act it out for the class.
6. Ask the class who else might have a dialogue if the story continued. Elicit:
 - Laurie's mother and Laurie
 - Laurie's mother and father
 - Laurie's teacher and Laurie
 - Laurie and his friend
 - Laurie and a student in your classAsk students to choose a pair from the list and to write their own dialogues, continuing the story.
7. When students finish writing, call on volunteers to share their dialogues with the class.

WEEK 4

STORIES ABOUT SCHOOL: A READING AND WRITING UNIT

Day 4: Life Lessons Learned in School/"Split Cherry Tree"

1. Ask students to write about a time they learned something in school that was very important to them. What was it? Who did they learn it from? Why was it important?

2. In groups of four, students read responses to each other and discuss.

3. Each groups reports back to the class and students explore the similarities of their learning experiences.

4. Distribute and begin reading "Split Cherry Tree," by Jesse Stuart to the top of page four, "Pa could not catch me! I'd get away!" Ask students: If you were Dave, what would you do? Students share responses and discuss.

Invite them to make predictions about the future: What do you think will happen when Dave's father goes to school?

5. Finish story, either by reading together or by having students read silently.

6. Using the same sentence starters as yesterday, ask students to write a response to the story. Encourage them to ask questions, express confusion, and connect to their own experiences.

Hear responses and discuss story.

WEEK 4

STORIES ABOUT SCHOOL: A READING AND WRITING UNIT

Day 5: Letters About School

1. Elicit from students a list of people (characters from the stories read and real people in their lives) that they might write a letter to discussing some of the issues raised during this unit on school. The list might include:

- Laurie
- Laurie's mother
- Dave
- Pa
- Professor Herbert
- a friend
- an ex-classmate
- a younger sibling

2. Also as a group, make a list of the issues that these letter might deal with. (This list will also come from the stories read in class and the students' own writing.) This list might include:

- misbehaving in school
- conflicts between home life and school life
- overcoming a learning difficulty
- overcoming a social difficulty

3. Ask students to choose a person from one of the stories or from life and an issue that they want to discuss with that person and begin writing a letter. Spend the rest of the session helping individual students pull together the ideas generated during the week into these letters.

4. Share letters.

WEEK 5
PREPARING FOR HIGH SCHOOL
OVERVIEW

Introduction: The purpose of this unit is to help students entering high school for the first time focus on their expectations and concerns. Students will identify the information they need to help make the transition from junior high school to high school a more comfortable one, and, individually or in groups, will devise a plan for gathering information (through interviews, observation, readings, maps, etc.) that helps answer some of their most pressing questions about high school. As a culminating activity, each group will present what they have learned about the new school to the rest of the class.

Suggested Weekly Calendar:

Day 1: Questions and Concerns About High School

Day 2: Where To Go For Information

Day 3: The Search

Day 4: Sharing Information Preparing Presentations

Day 5: Group Presentations

WEEK 5

PREPARING FOR HIGH SCHOOL

Day 1: What We Need To Know About High School

1. Remind students that last week's readings and discussions focused on their own personal experiences with school, as well as those of fictional characters. Introduce the idea that this week's activities will focus on what's ahead in terms of school - their experiences and concerns about entering high school.

2. Ask students to write in response to the questions below. Give them time after each question to respond.

- a) Write down everything you already know about high school
- b) What are you looking forward to about high school?
- c) What fears do you have? What are you worried about?
- d) What do you want to know about high school? What questions do you have?

3. When students finish writing, call on several volunteers to read their responses to the first three questions. Allow time for discussion.

4. Ask volunteers to share their responses to the final questions, and list their questions about high school on the board. Encourage students to think of and add as many questions as possible.

5. When you have a long list of questions, group them into categories and give each category a title. Sample categories are: cafeteria, sports and teams, after-school activities, courses offered, location of specific room, offices, etc.

WEEK 5

PREPARING FOR HIGH SCHOOL Day 2: Where To Go For Information

1. Now that students have generated a "need-to-know" list, tell them they'll have the opportunity to explore and investigate their new school in order to answer some of their own questions. Inform them that they will be working in groups to gather information and that each group will ultimately present what they have found out about the school to the rest of the class.

Look again at categories discussed yesterday, and ask students to choose which group they would like to join. What are they most interested in finding out more about? Invite them to the board to sign up. (If the groups are uneven, you may want to ask students to shift.)

2. Before going to small groups, brainstorm resources that students can use to gather information to answer their questions. These might include: teachers, security guards, cafeteria staff, other students, administrators, coaches, librarian, school publications, a walk around the school, etc.

3. In small groups, ask students to create a plan for gathering information. They might consider interviews or observations around the building. Ask them to write out a plan -what are they looking for; where will they go; what questions will they ask; what will they read. While students work, circulate and assist them by providing them with names of teachers and locations of particular offices, etc.

4. Invite groups to share their plans with the rest of the class. The rest of the class gives them feedback, helps them to add additional questions and suggest additional ways of gathering information.

5. Once again in groups, students prepare for their "searches." They should organize their notes/questions and divide the tasks among themselves.

Note: You may need to help make the arrangements for students who want to interview staff members. Also, it may be necessary to obtain permission in advance for students to visit various parts of the school building.

WEEK 5

PREPARING FOR HIGH SCHOOL Day 3: The Search

1. Students will spend most of this period "searching" for information about aspects of high school that concern them. Before they begin, ask them to respond in writing to several of the following questions.

- a. What is your group as a whole trying to find out?
- b. What is your plan for gathering information?
- c. What is your individual task?

Share responses and discuss.

2. Before groups leave the classroom to explore the school building, interview staff, observe layout, etc., tell them to meet one more time to make sure that their plans will generate adequate material for their presentation to the rest of the class. You might suggest, for instance, that students who are talking to guidance counselors ask for a school manual or that students who are concerned about where the gym is, try to draw a map.

3. Individually and in groups, students spend time gathering information around the building.

4. Students reassemble in the room. As a large group, discuss:

- a. How did it go?
- b. Any problems? How did you solve them?
- c. Do you still need more information? How can you get it?

WEEK 5

PREPARING FOR HIGH SCHOOL

Day 4: Sharing Information/ Preparing Presentations

1. Small groups meet to share results of their information gathering expeditions the day before. They should also plan how they will present their material to the rest of the class. Again, depending on the questions they started with, this will take many forms.

For instance, a group that set out to find out about the teams that exist in the school may want to prepare a chart of each team, including such information as: when the season begins and ends, name of coach, requirements for joining the team, schedule for tryouts, etc. As part of their presentations to the class, students may also prepare to interview a coach, or bring back samples of trophies won by the teams.

2. If groups find they need more information, this is a good opportunity for group members to go out one more time to get it.

Note: The purpose of these two activities is to prepare for group presentations for Day 5. You may need to help students come up with places to go for missing information and ways to pull it all together for their presentation.

WEEK 5

PREPARING FOR HIGH SCHOOL

Day 5: Group Presentations

1. Invite each group to present its findings to the rest of the class. As part of their presentations, invite students to describe how they went about getting their information.

After each presentation, allow time for questions and discussion.

2. When all groups have presented, ask students to write one more time in response to the following two questions:

- a. What have you learned that you didn't now before?
- b. What questions still remain?

3. Invite students to share responses and discuss.

WEEK 6
PREPARING A PUBLICATION
OVERVIEW

Introduction: The purpose of this unit is to have students look back at the writing that they've done over the previous five weeks and select one piece to revise and edit for publication. The process of producing this publication should be as active (for students) and as participatory as possible. The publication is meant to represent the experience of the group during their time together and each student should have a piece included. The teacher's role during this week is to assess what the group needs, both as a whole and individually, to make their writing "publishable." The teacher should formally respond to everyone's writing at least once during this week and should also prepare a few short mini-lessons on areas of grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc. that students seem to need help with.

Suggested Weekly Calendar:

- Day 1: Choosing a Selection**
- Day 2: Revision Groups**
- Day 3: Mini-lessons/Editing**
- Day 4: Proofreading/Instant Publication**
- Day 5: Read-around**

WEEK 6

PREPARING A PUBLICATION Day 1: Choosing A Selection

1. As a class, generate a list of all the pieces of writing that students were asked to write during the course of the program. Students should check their folders to see if they have all assigned pieces.

2. Ask students to re-read everything in their folders.

3. Now, ask students to choose the three pieces they like the best or that they think they might want to work on more.

4. In pairs, ask students to talk to a partner about the three pieces, explaining what they're about and why they like them/think they're interesting to continue working on. (This kind of talk and the opinion of a peer sometimes helps kids see where a piece might go and which one will sustain further thinking and writing.)

5. Students pick the pieces of writing that they will publish in the class magazine. Ask students what they might consider to prepare their writing for publication. Some points to suggest are:

- Does the reader have enough information?
- Is my writing organized in such a way that a reader can make sense of what I'm saying?
- Will rearranging sentences or paragraphs make my writing clearer or more powerful?
- Is there anything I want to leave out of this writing because it is unnecessary or distracting?

Note: Depending on which piece students choose, different amounts of revision and work will already have occurred. What should be emphasized is that publishing for a larger audience than oneself and one or two other students takes some more work and thoughtfulness. This lesson is still focusing on revision of content; we'll get to issues of "correctness" on Day 3.

6. Students work individually on writing using above questions as guides.

WEEK 6

PREPARING A PUBLICATION

Day 2: Revision Groups

1. Ask students to do some "process" writing-- Where are you with your writing? What do you like so far? What do you still need to do? Hear some of these responses.

2. Tell students that today is the last day to get feedback on their writing. Ask them to remember their experience working in groups in Week 2. Elicit purposes and benefits of working in groups. Tell them that this time they are going to respond orally, not on Peer Response Sheets. They should, however, still use those questions as guides for talking about each others' writing:

- What do you like best about the story? Why?
- What would you like to know more about?
- Is there any part of the writing that you find unclear or confusing?
- Any other comments that you think will help the writer?

3. Groups meet.

4. Students revise based on feedback from group.

5. Collect the writing and for next class respond to each student's work. These responses should encourage students to think more about what they've written, and give them suggestions for improving the impact of their writing. They should not be corrections of grammar, punctuation, etc. You should, however, prepare one or two mini-lessons based on the most common of the errors found in the papers.

WEEK 6

PREPARING A PUBLICATION

Day 3: Mini-lessons/Editing

1. Return students' papers with your responses. Students work on writing based on these comments.
2. Present one or two mini-lessons that reflect common problem areas in the papers you read. These might focus on avoiding run-on sentences, using commas, etc. Students then look for and correct these errors in their papers.
3. Students exchange papers with one other student for editing purposes.
4. Students prepare final "perfect" copy for publication. If computers are available, this is a great opportunity to use them. If not, have students place lined paper behind plain white, unlined paper so the lines can guide them to write neatly and evenly without the lines showing when they're duplicated.

WEEK 6

PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION Day 4: Proofreading/Instant Publication

1. Provide some time for students to finish rewriting final drafts.
2. Students again exchange papers with one other student to proofread. Students indicate errors in pencil so writer can fix them neatly.
3. Collect the writing and divide students into three groups to prepare "instant publication." Each group will have a different task. They are:
 - TITLE AND COVER DESIGN
 - WRITING AN INTRODUCTION
 - CREATING A TABLE OF CONTENTS (AND DETERMINING THE ORDER OF THE PIECES)
4. Collect each group's work and arrange for duplication (if miracles are possible, for the next day, if not, for early September). Students should keep copies of their work.

WEEK 6

PREPARING A PUBLICATION

Day 5: Read-around

1. This entire session is devoted to hearing the final pieces of each student. If possible, class should sit in a circle.
2. Ideally, the publication is distributed. If this is not possible, arrange with students to have a "reunion" on the first day of school in September where copies of the publication will be distributed.



*Broadway Aspiring Star - Talented
Deitra Hicks*

EVANDER STUDENT LIGHTS UP BROADWAY!

By Georgia Michelle Dunn

Not many teenagers can say they've mingled with the likes of Whitney Houston, Lionel Richie, Dionne Warwick, Bill Cosby, and Harry Belafonte. However, Deitra Hicks can. She is currently starring in "Mama I Want To Sing", one of the longest running black musicals.

Deitra Hicks is a multi-talented 18 year old senior who keeps up with her school work in the day and at night sings, acts, and dances as she stars as Doris Winter.

When she went to audition for the part, Hicks impressed the casting directors with her talent and was hired the same night.

Doris Winter is a girl who grew up in the church and was inspired by her father to sing. As her family and friends watched her talent grow, she turned into a big-time singer. Deitra portrays this singer. The hit song, "Just One Look," which made Doris famous is one of the highlights of the show.

Hicks left Music and Art to attend Evander Childs and is currently living in the Bronx. The Hicks family is very proud of their daughter and wish her all the best.

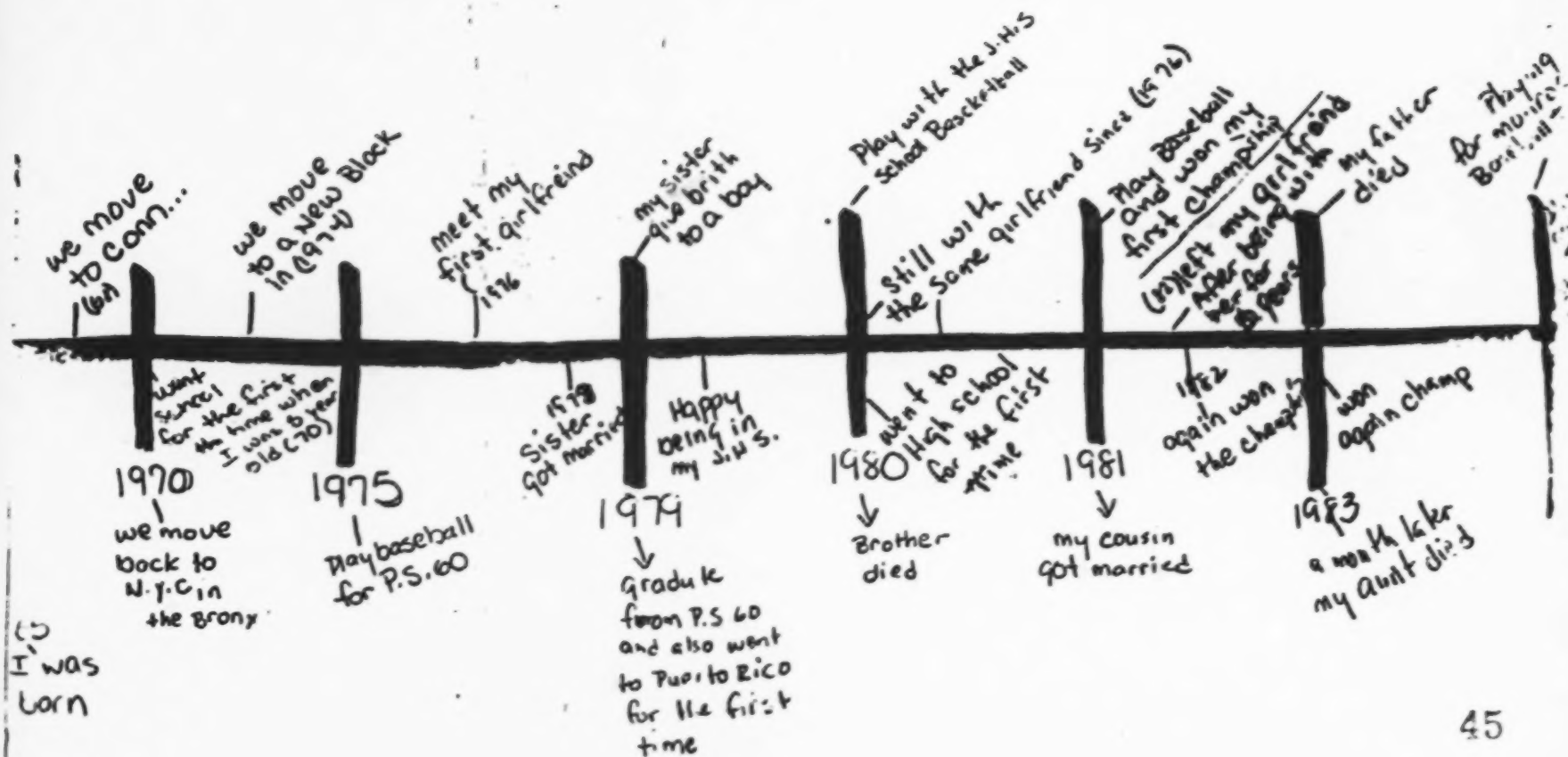
Deitra's singing talent developed long before "Mama I Want To Sing" came along. In the past Deitra has made a 45 gospel record titled "The Answer is Christ".

Of all her many talents, Hicks says she enjoys singing the most. Ms. Hicks plans to do many things in the future in the performing arts field. She has received many offers for other Broadway Musicals but has not yet accepted any.

Although she considers herself lucky to have this part, Deitra realizes that there are disadvantages. "You have to remember that it's a job. Your social life is cut off. You might want to party, but you have to work," she says.

There are many advantages however. Deitra has made a commercial advertising the show and a record album of "Mama I Want To Sing." She has traveled and performed in Europe, and appeared on several talk shows such as "Midday Live," "WELLS," "The Morning Show," and "Donahue." She also enjoys the attention of her fans who cheer her on and ask autograph.

With her talent and drive Deitra Hicks is sure to become a superstar!



(5)
I was
born

Peer Response Sheet

Writer's name: _____

Your name: _____

Listen carefully as the writer reads his or her piece aloud. Ask for a second reading if you need it.

Answer the following questions with the intention of helping the writer improve his or her writing.

1. What do you like best about the story?
2. What would you like to know more about?
3. Is there any part of the writing that you find unclear or confusing?
4. Do you have any other comments about the writing?

JAMAICA • Claude McKay

The Tropics in New York

Bananas ripe and green, and ginger-root,
Cocoa in pods and alligator pears
And tangerines and mangoes and grape fruit.
Fit for the highest prize at parish fairs.

Set in the window, bringing memories
Of fruit-trees laden by low-singing rills,
And dewy dawns, and mystical blue skies
In benediction over nun-like hills.

My eyes grew dim, and I could no more gaze.
A wave of longing through my body swept.
And, hungry for the old, familiar ways,
I turned aside and bowed my head and wept.

From: Selected Poems of Claude McKay Copyright © 1963 by Bookman
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from El Bronx Remembered
by Nicholasa Mohr

UNCLE CLAUDIO

Jaime and Charlie sat on the stoop waiting for the rest of their family to come down. They were all going to the airport to see Uncle Claudio and Aunt Chela take the plane back to Puerto Rico.

Charlie had arrived in the Bronx very early this morning with his parents and older sisters. They had driven in from Manhattan. The two boys were first cousins. They saw each other only on special holidays and at family meetings, and today they were glad to be together again.

It was a warm spring Saturday morning. People were still in their apartments and the streets were empty. The boys sat silently, watching the traffic roll by and listening to the faraway sounds coming from inside the tenements. People were beginning to open their windows and turn on their radios. After a while, Jaime stood up and stretched.

"How about a game of stoop ball, Charlie?" he asked, smiling and holding up a Spalding ball.

"Better not," warned Charlie. "I got my good clothes on. You too, Jaime. We'll get it if we get dirty."

Bouncing the ball quickly against the stoop steps a few times, Jaime stopped and sighed. "You're right," he said.

"They sure are taking their sweet time coming down, ain't they?"

"True," answered Jaime, "but they gotta be at the airport at a certain time, so they can't be too late."

"Jaime, do you know why Uncle Claudio is going back to Puerto Rico so fast?" asked Charlie. "He only been here a few months. My mother and father were just talking this morning about how foolish he is to leave. Giving up a good job and good pay and all."

"My mother and father say the same thing like yours. But I know why he's going back to Puerto Rico."

"You do?"

"Yeah," answered Jaime, "I do."

"Tell me."

"Well, I came home from playing ball one day, I guess about a couple of weeks ago. As I came up the stairs I heard a noise, like someone crying. When I came to my floor, there was Uncle Claudio, standing in front of our door. He had his face buried in his hands and was crying out loud."

"Crying?" interrupted Charlie.

"Yes, he was. Because I tapped him and he turned around. His face was full of tears, and when he saw me he just took out his handkerchief, blew his nose, and went into our apartment real quick."

"Why was he crying?"

"I didn't know why, then. He went right into his room, and I forgot about it. But later that evening, I was doing my homework in my room and I heard a lotta noise coming from the kitchen. It sounded like a big argument so

I went to see what was happening. Papi was standing and shouting at Uncle Claudio, and Aunt Chela was crying and wiping her eyes. My mother was trying to calm down my father."

"What were they saying?"

"Well, Papi was telling Uncle Claudio that he was an ungrateful brother to be going back to Humacao, after all he and Mami had done for him and Aunt Chela. You know, get them jobs and all. Well, all of a sudden Uncle Claudio jumped up, clenching his fists at Papi. You know what a bad temper my father has, so I thought, Uh-oh, here it comes; they are gonna stomp each other. But when Papi put up his hands to fight back, Uncle Claudio sat down and began to cry. Burst right out into tears just like in the hallway!" Jaime paused and nodded.

"Wow," said Charlie. "Did he tell why he was crying?"

"Wait, I'm coming to that. At first, everybody started asking him a whole lotta questions. He kept saying in Spanish, 'No puede ser,' something like that, you know, like 'It can't never be.' Like that. Then he started to tell why he can't stay here in this country. First, he says there are too many people all living together with no place to go. In his own home, in Humacao, people take it easy and know how to live. They got respect for each other, and know their place. At home, when he walks down the street, he is Don Claudio. But here, in New York City, he is Don Nobody, that's what he said. He doesn't get no respect here. Then he tells something that happened to him that day, in the subway, that he says made him make up his mind to go back home."

"What was that?"

"Well, he got on at his regular station downtown and there was no seats. So he stands, like always, and he notices two young men whispering to each other and pointing at him. At first he don't recognize them. But then one of them looks familiar. They are both well dressed, with suits and ties. One guy waves to him and smiles, so he waves back. Then the guy starts to call out to him by his first name. He says he is Carlito, the son of a lady called Piedad. She used to work for my father and Uncle Claudio's family back in Puerto Rico. The lady used to do the cleaning and cooking, and she was fired. Uncle Claudio says that this young guy is talking real loud and thanks him for firing his mother, because they came to this country and now are doing real well. He even told Uncle Claudio he has no bad feelings and offered him his seat. Then he asked Uncle Claudio where he worked and offered him a better job in his place. Well, Uncle Claudio said he was so embarrassed he got off before his stop, just to get away from that young guy."

"He did?" asked Charlie. "Why?"

"That's exactly what my Papi asked him. Why? Well, Uncle Claudio got real red in the face and started hollering at Papi. He said that in Humacao the maid's son would never talk to him like that. Here, that punk can wear a suit and tie while he has to wear dirty clothes all day. Back home in Humacao, Uncle Claudio says he could get that guy fired and make him apologize for the way he spoke to him, calling him by his first name like that. His mother was caught stealing food and was fired . . . and that she

was lucky they did not put her in jail! Anyway, Papi tries to explain to him that things are different here. That people don't think like that, and that these things are not important. That there are better opportunities here in the future for Uncle Claudio's sons. And that Uncle Claudio has to be patient and learn the new ways here in this country." Jaime stopped talking for a moment.

"What did Uncle Claudio say?"

"He got really mad at Papi," said Jaime. "He says that Papi is losing all his values here in New York, and that he don't want his boys to come here, ever. That he is glad he left them in Humacao. There, they know that their father is somebody. He says he is ashamed of his younger brother—you know, my father. Anyway, everybody tried to calm him down and talk him out of going. Even Aunt Chela. I think she likes it here. But he got so excited he jumped up and made the sign of the cross and swore by Jesucristo and la Virgen María that he will never come back to El Bronx again! That was it, he made up his mind to go back, right there!"

"That was it?"

"Yes," Jaime nodded. "That's what happened."

"I don't know," said Charlie, shaking his head. "But I don't care who I meet on the subway, because I may never meet them again. I never see the same people on the subway twice even. Do you? Maybe Uncle Claudio didn't know that."

"You are right, but it wouldn't make no difference because he just made up his mind to leave."

"Anyway," Charlie said, "what's so bad about what that

guy said? In fact I thought he seemed nice—giving him his seat and all. Maybe it was something else, and he's not saying the truth."

"No," Jaime said, "that was it. I know; I was there."

"Well, that's no big deal if you ask me. I thought it was something bad," Charlie said.

"I know," said Jaime, "and when I asked Papi why Uncle Claudio got so excited and has to leave, he said that Uncle Claudio lives in another time and that he is dreaming instead of facing life."

"What does that mean?" asked Charlie.

"I asked him the same thing. I don't know what that means neither. And Papi told me that when I grow up I'll understand. Then he started to laugh a whole lot and said that maybe I'll never understand."

"That's what your father said?"

"That's what he said. Nothing else," answered Jaime.

"Well . . ." Charlie shrugged his shoulders and looked at Jaime.

They sat silently for a while, enjoying the bright sun as it warmed their bodies and the stone steps of the stoop.

Very young children played, some on the sidewalk, others in the street. They chalked areas for different games, forming groups. The men were lining up in front of their parked cars with buckets of water, detergent, car wax, and tool boxes. They called out to one another as they began the long and tedious ritual of washing, polishing and fixing their secondhand automobiles.

Windows opened; some of the women shook out the bedclothes, others leaned against the mattresses placed on

the sills for an airing and looked out along the avenue. The streets were no longer empty. People hustled and bustled back and forth, and the avenue vibrated with activity.

Jaime and Charlie grew restless.

"Too bad we can't go over to the schoolyard and play ball," said Jaime.

"Here they come at last!" said Charlie.

Uncle Claudio walked by with his wife, Chela. The boys noticed that he wore the same outfit he had arrived with last year: a white suit, white shirt with a pale-blue tie, white shoes, and a very pale beige, wide-brimmed, panama hat. Aunt Chela had a brand-new dress and hat.

The adults talked among themselves as they decided how to group the families into the two cars.

"We wanna ride together, Papi. Please, me and Charlie!" Jaime pulled his father's arm.

"O.K.," said his father, "you two jump in." He pointed to one of the cars.

Jaime and Charlie sat together, enjoying the ride.

"What do you think? If we get back in time, how about going to the schoolyard and have a game of stickball? You can meet all my friends," said Jaime.

"Right!" answered Charlie.

Tall Woman and the Diné

Jessie Alford Nunn

Tazbah hated the poverty that she and her grandmother lived in, but running away was not as simple as it looked.

Tazbah awoke when sun touched the old cottonwood that leaned over Grandmother's crumbling little house. She heard the speckled rooster crow and the squeaking hinges of the tumbledown shed. In one lithe motion she leaped up. This was the Day!

She flung on her clothes, gave a swift brush to her hair, and dashed to the kitchen. Quickly she put on eggs to boil, made toast, set out fruit.

The home economics teacher said these made a proper, balanced breakfast, but Grandmother always made a noise in her nose when she saw them.

She preferred mutton stewed with chilies, a cup of heavily sweetened coffee, and a piece of fried bread. She liked to sit on the floor at mealtime too. Tazbah frowned at the cluttered little kitchen with its warped floor, scarred table, and big water stain on the ceiling. Angrily she worked the handle of the rusty old pump in the backyard. How she hated this place! Oh, her new gift shop *must* be a success. She must get away. To live like other people with a shining white kitchen, a sofa in the living room, a lace cloth on the table, to invite friends in casually without being ashamed; that would be heaven!

She could not resist a peak through the cracked window at the sign she had set up in the sun-baked clay of the front yard. "EL BURRO ROJO, GIFTS AND COLD DRINKS," it said in fancy black letters beneath the picture of a mischievous pink burro with a big daisy dangling from his mouth.

Tazbah studied the scrubby, scanty grass and the morning glories she had trained up on trellises to hide the unsightly old buildings behind the house. She had hoped the place would look cool and inviting so that motorists would want to stop, look, and refresh themselves, but already the leaves seemed dusty and a little wilted.

Suddenly a feeling of doubt dragged at her. Last night everything had looked so nice. All her hard work had seemed worthwhile. Would people really like the things she had spent so many hours to make and buy? What if she failed? Sternly she put down her nagging doubts and fears, forcing a smile for Grandmother, who bent to enter the low doorway and set a basket of shelled corn on the floor.

"*Yahtehe, Shima,*" she said, for Tall Woman, her grandmother, spoke only a little English, though she had lived just off the Navajo Reservation at the edge of the dusty little town of Vuelta for many years. The old woman looked at the food, the napkins, the dishes, in silence, but laid aside her shawl and sat down without protest. Surprised, Tazbah studied the seamed, brown face. Was Grandmother not well, then? With deliberation she buttered and ate her toast, first breaking it in four pieces as her granddaughter had begged her many times to do.

Tall Woman took her time, finished her meal, licking her fingers only a little, and sat silently, hands clasped in her lap. Nervously Tazbah wondered what was coming, for her grandmother opposed the gift shop. She thought the way they lived was good, and could not understand why anyone would need curtains, a sink in the kitchen, a new roof. Here she had lived for 40 winters with Grandfather, Hosteen Denetclah, growing the beans, corn, squash, and chickens, while he worked on the big irrigation ditch, the *acequia madre*.

When he died in the year of the Big Snow, she had lived on alone, singing her ancient songs to the rising sun, weaving her rugs, hoeing in her garden, tending her chickens. Sometimes she rode into the desert with some of her clan, traveling in their wagons to the squaw dances, the fire dances, the *yebichai* chants.

Tazbah waited impatiently, not quite daring to clear the table until Grandmother spoke, though there was yet much to be done in the room she had converted from the front porch to the gift shop.

"I have finished," said Tall Woman at last. "I wait for you to tell me if there is some work you wish me to do in your shop."

The girl's breath escaped in surprise and dismay. The last thing she expected or wanted was Grandmother's presence in the new shop. What would customers think of an old Navajo woman in wide, calico skirt and velvet blouse, her white hair untidily tied with a twist of yarn! An old woman who could speak almost no English!

"No, *Shima*. You could not wait on customers, and you are busy with your garden and weaving."

A shadow of hurt touched the puckered old face as Tall Woman went silently outside to sit at her loom under the brush shelter.

Tazbah rattled the dishes in the pan. It isn't as if she liked or approved of the shop, she argued with herself, or that she understands why I can't live this way all my life. What is the matter with old people anyway, that they can't see how things are?

She flung the water beneath the cottonwood, so as not to waste even a drop, and hurried into the shop at the front of the little adobe house. Anxiously she tried to see it with strangers' eyes. To her it looked wonderful, just like the pictures in magazines—or almost like, anyway. She had taken care of children, scrubbed floors, washed windows, to buy the glass to enclose the front porch. She had done all the work herself, nailing boards, painting, propping up the sagging old floor.

She twirled the postcard rack, pinned some "God Bless Our Home" pillow covers on the wall, dusted a table of miniature dogs, kittens, squirrels, horses, and burros, straightened the bows on a line of plush giraffes, scotties, and teddy bears. These were what all gift shops carried. She had read about them in magazines and seen them in shops she had visited on her few trips to other towns. For a whole year while she was finishing high school she had worked and planned toward this day!

Tazbah hurried into her bedroom, took out the pink-checked gingham dress she had made in sewing class, slipped it on and wound her braids high on her proud head, then leaned close to the little mirror propped on the old carved chest. How will Grandmother take it when I go, she wondered. No ordeal could be worse than high school, but it had shown her a glimpse of a different life. If a girl had money for college she could learn to work in an office, a fine shop, a classroom. She could have a nice apartment, travel, friends, lovely dresses. How sick she was of this cruel, dry land, its poverty, its hard work, its thousands of backward Indian people. Maybe they were her own people, but once she had money to go away she meant to turn her back on them forever and, as they would say, drive her sheep farther up the mountain.

Her mind went back to the day nearly five years ago when she had heard the death chant for her mother and father, drowned in their wagon when a flash flood roared down Red Wash. That marked the beginning of her hatred for this land of little rain.

The *Diné*, her people, carried her, numb with grief and shock, to the home of her only blood relative. Grandmother received her with the gentle impassiveness of the Navajo, set food before her, gave her a place to sleep.

Night after night the child lay staring dry-eyed into the darkness, aching with loneliness for the kindly father and laughing mother whom she could now scarcely remember.

The truancy officer visited them, learned her age, made her enter high school. She was the only Navajo there. And though she had learned well enough at the government day school, she spoke Navajo at home, and could not understand the talk of the staring, giggling white children or the teachers' explanations.

Every day she grew more silent, angry, and proud. The students made fun of her moccasins, wide skirt, and velvet blouse. One of the teachers took her aside and told her,

gently, to bathe more often and change her dress. Cruelly humiliated, she said nothing, for she had but one dress.

It was a long time before she could earn enough to buy another dress and shoes. But she scrubbed herself every night with home-made yellow soap and water carried from the pump. For her there were no class parties, dances, picnics. She sat up night after night studying by the light of their smoking coal oil lamp. And she learned. She was smart and she beat those pale, easy talking, smiling, soft-handed boys and girls at their own game. By senior year she had gained their respect and at graduation was valedictorian but she had not one friend in the whole school.

Here, she reasoned, there was no future for her. Prejudice and poverty were too strong. But there was one way out—the gift shop. She had saved incessantly, a penny at a time, and now, if all went well, hard work and thrift would take her away to college, a real life, a happy future.

Was that the slam of a car door? Her heart thudded as she raced to the front of the house, carefully arranging a welcoming smile on her face.

"This the right road to Vuelta, Miss?" The man was a stranger to the country. His worried face had not seen much sun.

"Yes, you'll see the town when you get up on the mesa."

He glanced incuriously, almost unseeingly, about the little shop. "Could you let me have some water for my car? It's boiling, not used to this high, dry country."

She brought a bucket and helped pump the water.

The next traveler said as he drank a coke, "Quite a little place you have here." His eyes roved around the shop and he smiled at the satin pillow tops.

"Howdy, Ma'am, hot enough for you?" inquired the lanky cowboy with the big hat who stopped his truck and trailer as if he feared he might break something. All he wanted was water for his horse.

Then there were two ladies from Washington, a couple from Massachusetts, and a college boy going to Oregon State. Desperately she made bright small talk, tried to create interest in the things she had to sell, but nobody seemed to care. Limp with fatigue she counted up her sales that evening—a handful of postcards and a pair of sunglasses. Not quite enough to pay for the ice that cooled the cokes in the big washtub!

The next day she sold a few more postcards, some cokes, and a package of decorated paper napkins. As the week passed her heart and hopes sank lower and lower. What could be wrong?

Then, one day a big white station wagon with California license plates stopped under the old cottonwood. A family party of a mother and father, their white-haired parents, a tall, sun-burned young son about her own age, and a younger boy and girl got out. "El Burro Rojo!" laughed the older man, fanning himself with his hat.

"That's the most intriguing sign we've seen," said his wife. "It's a relief from 'Ye Olde Gifte Shoppe' and 'Sam's Trading Post.'"

The little girl with blonde braids and her brother, a mischievous freckled boy of kindergarten age, raced inside, demanding cold drinks. Tazbah hurried to bring ice and open bottles. The grown folks walked about, looking.

"Too bad, Father," she overheard the young-looking mother say over the table of ceramic animals. "It's no different from a hundred others." She joined her husband who was regarding, with a quizzical expression, the line of plush toys.

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed the pink-cheeked, white-haired woman, "I had hoped to find real, southwestern things, genuine hand-crafted articles of leather, wood, and silver, things I've read about."

They murmured politely, paid for their drinks, said good-bye. Tazbah's throat ached with disappointment. They did not care for the shop at all, had seemed contemptuous of it ac-

tually, and they appeared to be traveled, educated people who would enjoy lovely things.

She followed them outside, hoping the stirring cottonwood leaves would cool her burning cheeks.

"Where's Michael?" said the children's father.

"I think he's looking for the chickens, Daddy," giggled the little girl. "He heard hens talking in the backyard."

"Trust him," said his father ruefully, "to get lost if he possibly can." He raised his voice. "Michael, where are you?"

"Here, Daddy," called the child, not far away. His father stooped under the cottonwood limbs and went toward the backyard.

Tazbah's face flamed. The strangers would see Tall Woman. Because they didn't live like other people, Tazbah never invited anybody to visit. What would these educated, cultivated people think?

Strings of scarlet peppers were drying on the gray adobe walls. Speckled chickens scratched in the dirt. Through the window could be seen bunches of herbs tied to kitchen rafters. On the window sill a row of apple dolls dried in the sun. The yard was littered with drying sheepskins stretched on boards, heaps of unshucked corn, piles of wool. Grandmother herself was weaving at her loom made of poles.

The little boy stood watching, entranced by her flying fingers. "It's pretty," he said, watching the design take shape. She continued battenning down the yarn and throwing the shuttle.

"What's your name, Lady?" he persisted, stroking her purple skirt.

"Good day, Ma'am," said the child's father, taking off his hat. "I'm afraid my little boy is troubling you. Come, Michael."

Suddenly the young man came forward. "Yahtehe, Shima," he greeted the old woman respectfully in the guttural Navajo tongue. She dropped her shuttle, looked up in surprise. He asked some questions about the rug, the meaning of the design, significance of the different colors.

Smiling, he gained her confidence and soon Tall Woman was telling him about the *yeibichai* figures, the dyeing of wool, the little white lifeline carried to the rug's edge to let out the spirit of the weaver. The others came from the car and crowded around. They shook Tall Woman's hand and with the young man interpreting they asked her many things. The old woman smiled; her eyes snapped; she even tried out her small English.

"Oh, Mother, look!" cried the little girl, catching sight of the dolls in the window.

"How wonderfully realistic!" said the older woman. "Donald, will you ask how these are made? I hope they are for sale."

The young man tried, but Grandmother shook her head. She doesn't understand," he said. "I don't know any words for such things." They all turned expectantly to Tazbah who stood by in an agony of embarrassment. How could Grandmother not realize these people were simply trying to be polite?

"They are only apple dolls," she explained. "My grandmother makes them for children of her clan. She peels and dries the apples, then makes a hole in the center. While they are drying, she carves the features and presses in the wrinkles with her fingers." She took one up to demonstrate. "For eyes she uses black-headed pins. She pulls long hairs from our burro's tail, sews them in the center, glues them to the head, and braids the ends. Then she paints the faces with shellac and fastens the heads on a carved body. From scraps of cloth and deerskin she makes clothes."

Tall Woman, smiling, handed them all the dolls in the window and went into the kitchen for more. The others followed, laughing and talking, still full of questions. She gave them some dried herbs, showed them her herb pots and three age-blackened wooden *santos* carved long ago by Grandfather. Then they all trailed along the path to the vegetable garden. The young man fell behind to walk with Tazbah.

"Your grandmother is a wonderful woman, genuine and charming," he said, his face alight.

"When did you learn to speak Navajo?" she asked.

"I am studying archaeology at the University of New Mexico and on our field trips last summer I learned a little."

"Grandmother is usually reserved with strangers but she seems to look upon you and your family as friends."

"Do you think, if I am very respectful, she would talk to me sometime about tribal legends and chants? Next year, for my senior project I want to do research in Navajo folklore. I'll bet she knows more than the professors."

"She does know many stories and she attends the ceremonies." Something stirred in Tazbah's mind, a feeling of pride in her heritage, a wave of something like happiness. "I think she would speak to you about the *Diné*."

The others were coming back. Everybody carried something: gourds, braided ears of many-colored corn, piñon nuts, sunflower seeds.

Tazbah stared, amazed. How was it that she had not been able to make friends with strangers, to create interest, to capture attention, while Grandmother, uneducated, old-fashioned, taciturn, had, without trying, captivated these sophisticated people? They hung on her words, shook her hand, talked by gestures.

"We'll see you in two weeks," promised the white-haired man, speaking slowly, "and remember, that beautiful yeibichai rug is spoken for already."

They drove off in a chorus of goodbyes.

Tazbah looked at her hand which the young man had clasped so warmly. Already she looked forward to his coming again.

Tall Woman opened her twisted, brown fingers to disclose a roll of bills. "For you, Grandchild, for your—how do say—college."

Tazbah thought with contempt of her gift shop, full of stuffed toys, satin pillows, toy animals. She thought with sadness of the many times she had denied hospitality because her false pride made her ashamed that Grandmother was "different."

Of course she was different! Wonderful and wise, full of color and warmth like tall, green corn, golden squash blossoms. She radiated kindness and gave of herself, the gift that in all the world is most priceless. And in her was the strength and mystery of the desert itself. She was what Navajos meant when they proudly named themselves *Diné*, "The People." But it had been only through other people's eyes that Tazbah had finally recognized this.

She put an arm around the thin, straight shoulders. "Akeyeh. Thank you, my Grandmother," she said in Navajo, "but not yet. You keep the money. When I have learned more of what Tall Woman and the *Diné* have to teach me, then it may be that I can drive my sheep farther up the mountain."

Charles

Shirley Jackson

The day my son Laurie started kindergarten he renounced¹ corduroy overalls with bibs and began wearing blue jeans with a belt. I watched him go off the first morning with the older girl next door, seeing clearly that an era of my life was ended, my sweet-voiced nursery-school tot replaced by a long-trousered, swaggering character who forgot to stop at the corner and wave goodbye to me.

He came home the same way, the front door slamming open, his cap on the floor, and the voice suddenly become raucous² shouting, "Isn't anybody here?"

At lunch he spoke insolently³ to his father, spilled his baby sister's milk, and remarked that his teacher said we were not to take the name of the Lord in vain.

"How was school today?" I asked, elaborately casual.

"All right," he said.

"Did you learn anything?" his father asked.

Laurie regarded his father coldly. "I didn't learn nothing," he said.

"Anything," I said. "Didn't learn anything."

"The teacher spanked⁴ a boy, though," Laurie said, addressing his bread and butter. "For being fresh," he added, with his mouth full.

"What did he do?" I asked. "Who was it?"

Laurie thought. "It was Charles," he said. "He was fresh. The teacher spanked him and made him stand in a corner. He was awfully fresh."

"What did he do?" I asked again. But Laurie slid off his chair, took a cookie, and left, while his father was still saying, "See here, young man."

The next day Laurie remarked at lunch, as soon as he sat down, "Well, Charles was bad again today." He grinned and said, "Today Charles hit the teacher."

"Good heavens," I said, mindful of the Lord's name. "I suppose he got spanked again?"

"He sure did," Laurie said. "Look up," he said to his father.

"What?" his father said, looking up.

"Look down," Laurie said. "Look at my thumb. Gee, you're dumb." He began to laugh insanely.

"Why did Charles hit the teacher?" I asked quickly.

"Because she tried to make him color with red crayons," Laurie said. "Charles wanted to color with green crayons so he hit the teacher and she spanked him and said nobody play with Charles but everybody did."

The third day—it was Wednesday of the first week—Charles bounced a seesaw onto the head of a little girl and made her bleed, and the teacher made him stay inside all during recess. Thursday Charles had to stand in a corner during story time because he kept pounding his feet on the floor. Friday Charles was deprived of black-board privileges because he threw chalk.

On Saturday I remarked to my husband, "Do you think kindergarten is too unsettling for Laurie? All this toughness, and bad grammar. And this Charles boy sounds like such a bad influence."

"It'll be all right," my husband said reassuringly. "Bound to be people like Charles in the world. Might as well meet them now as later."

On Monday Laurie came home late, full of news. "Charles," he shouted as he came up the hill. I was waiting anxiously on the front steps. "Charles," Laurie yelled all the way up the hill; "Charles was bad again."

"Come right in," I said, as soon as he came close enough. "Lunch is waiting."

"You know what Charles did?" he demanded, following me through the door. "Charles yelled so in school they sent a boy in from first grade to tell the teacher she had to make Charles keep quiet, and so Charles had to stay after school. And so all the children stayed to watch him."

"What did he do?" I asked.

"He just sat there," Laurie said, climbing into his chair at the table. "Hi, Pop, y'old dust mop."

"Charles had to stay after school today," I told my husband. "Everyone stayed with him."

"What does this Charles look like?" my husband asked Laurie. "What's his other name?"

"He's bigger than me," Laurie said. "And he doesn't have any rubbers and he doesn't ever wear a jacket."

Monday night was the first Parent-Teachers meeting, and only the fact that the baby had a cold kept me from going; I wanted passionately to meet Charles's mother. On Tuesday Laurie remarked suddenly, "Our teacher had a friend come to see her in school today."

"Charles's mother?" my husband and I asked simultaneously.⁴

"Naaah," Laurie said scornfully. "It was a man who came and made us do exercises; we had to touch our toes. Look." He climbed down from his chair and squatted down and touched his toes. "Like this," he said. He got solemnly back into his chair and said, picking up his fork, "Charles didn't even do exercises."

"That's fine," I said heartily. "Didn't Charles want to do exercises?"

"Naaah," Laurie said. "Charles was so fresh to the teacher's friend he wasn't let do exercises."

"Fresh again?" I said.

"He kicked the teacher's friend," Laurie said. "The teacher's friend told Charles to touch his toes like I just did and Charles kicked him."

"What are they going to do about Charles, do you suppose?" Laurie's father asked him.

Laurie shrugged. "Throw him out of school, I guess," he said.

Wednesday and Thursday were routine; Charles yelled during story hour and hit a boy in the stomach and made him cry. On Friday Charles stayed after school again and so did all the other children.

With the third week of kindergarten Charles was an institution in our family; the baby was being a Charles when she cried all afternoon; Laurie did a Charles when he filled his wagon full of mud and pulled it through the kitchen; even my husband, when he caught his elbow in the telephone cord and pulled telephone, ashtray, and a bowl of flowers off the table, said, after the first minute, "Looks like Charles."

During the third and fourth weeks it looked like a reformation⁵ in Charles; Laurie reported grimly at lunch on Thursday of the third week,

"Charles was so good today the teacher gave him an apple."

"What?" I said, and my husband added warily.⁶ "You mean Charles?"

"Charles," Laurie said. "He gave the crayons around and he picked up the books afterward and the teacher said he was her helper."

"What happened?" I asked incredulously.⁷

"He was her helper, that's all," Laurie said, and shrugged.

"Can this be true, about Charles?" I asked my husband that night. "Can something like this happen?"

"Wait and see," my husband said cynically.⁸ "When you've got a Charles to deal with, this may mean he's only plotting."

He seemed to be wrong. For over a week, Charles was the teacher's helper; each day he handed things out and he picked things up; no one had to stay after school.

"The P.T.A. meeting's next week again," I told my husband one evening. "I'm going to find Charles's mother there."

"Ask her what happened to Charles," my husband said. "I'd like to know."

"I'd like to know myself," I said.

On Friday of that week things were back to normal. "You know what Charles did today?" Laurie demanded at the lunch table, in a voice slightly awed. "He told a little girl to say a word and she said it and the teacher washed her mouth out with soap and Charles laughed."

"What word?" his father asked unwisely, and Laurie said, "I'll have to whisper it to you, it's so bad." He got down off his chair and went around to his father. His father bent his head down and Laurie whispered joyfully. His father's eyes widened.

"Did Charles tell the little girl to say that?" he asked respectfully.

"She said it twice," Laurie said. "Charles told her to say it twice."

"What happened to Charles?" my husband asked.

"Nothing," Laurie said. "He was passing out the crayons."

Monday morning Charles abandoned the little girl and said the evil word himself three or four times, getting his mouth washed out with soap each time. He also threw chalk.

My husband came to the door with me that evening as I set out for the P.T.A. meeting. "Invite her over for a cup of tea after the meeting," he said. "I want to get a look at her."

"If only she's there," I said.

"She'll be there," my husband said. "I don't see how they could hold a P.T.A. meeting without Charles's mother."

At the meeting I sat restlessly, scanning each comfortable matronly face, trying to determine which one hid the secret of Charles. None of them looked to me haggard⁹ enough. No one stood up in the meeting and apologized for the way her son had been acting. No one mentioned Charles.

After the meeting I identified and sought out Laurie's kindergarten teacher. She had a plate with a cup of tea and a piece of chocolate cake; I had a plate with a cup of tea and a piece of marshmallow cake. We maneuvered¹⁰ up to one another cautiously, and smiled.

"I've been so anxious to meet you," I said. "I'm Laurie's mother."

"We're all so interested in Laurie," she said.

"Well, he certainly likes kindergarten," I said. "He talks about it all the time."

"We had a little trouble adjusting, the first week or so," she said primly, "but now he's a fine little helper. With occasional lapses," of course."

"Laurie usually adjusts very quickly," I said. "I suppose this time it's Charles's influence."

"Charles?"

"Yes," I said, laughing, "you must have your hands full in that kindergarten, with Charles."

"Charles?" she said. "We don't have any Charles in the kindergarten."

SPLIT CHERRY TREE

by Jesse Stuart

"I don't mind staying after school," I says to Professor Herbert "but I'd rather you'd whip me with a switch and let me go home early. Pa will whip me anyway for getting home two hours late."

"You are too big to whip," says Professor Herbert, "and I have to punish you for climbing up in that cherry tree. You boys knew better than that! The other five boys have paid their dollar each. You have been the only one who has not helped pay for the tree. Can't you borrow a dollar?"

"I can't," I says. "I'll have to take the punishment. I wish it would be quicker punishment. I wouldn't mind."

Professor Herbert stood and looked at me. He was a big man. He wore a gray suit of clothes. The suit matched his gray hair.

"You don't know my father," I says to Professor Herbert. "He might be called a little old-fashioned. He makes us mind him until we're twenty-one years old. He believes: 'If you spare the rod you spoil the child.' I'll never be able to make him understand about the cherry tree. I'm the first of my people to go to high school."

"You must take the punishment," says Professor Herbert. "You must stay two hours after school today and two hours after school tomorrow. I am allowing you twenty-five cents an hour. That is good money for a high school student. You can sweep the schoolhouse floor, wash the blackboards and clean windows. I'll pay the dollar for you."

I couldn't ask Professor Herbert to loan me a dollar. He never offered to loan it to me. I had to stay and help the janitor and work out my fine at a quarter an hour.

I thought as I swept the floor: "What will Pa do to me? What lie can I tell him when I go home? Why did we ever climb that cherry tree and break it down for anyway? Why did we run crazy over the hills away from the crowd? Why did we do all of this? Six of us climbed up in a little cherry tree after one little lizard! Why did the tree split and fall with us? It

should have been a stronger tree! Why did Eif Crabtree just happen to be below us plowing and catch us in his cherry tree? Why wasn't he a better man than to charge us six dollars for the tree?"

It was six o'clock when I left the schoolhouse. I had six miles to walk home. It would be after seven when I got home. I had all my work to do when I got home. It took Pa and me both to do the work. Seven cows to milk. Nineteen head of cattle to feed, four mules, twenty-five hogs. Firewood and stovewood to cut and water to draw from the well. He would be doing it when I got home. He would be mad and wondering what was keeping me!

I hurried home. I would run under the dark leafless trees. I would walk fast uphill. I would run down the hill. The ground was freezing. I had to hurry. I had to run. I reached the long ridge that led to our cow pasture. I ran along this ridge. The wind dried the sweat on my face. I ran across the pasture to the house.

I threw down my books in the chipyard. I ran to the barn to spread fodder on the ground for the cattle. I didn't take time to change my clean school clothes for my old work clothes. I ran out to the barn. I saw Pa spreading fodder on the ground for the cattle. That was my job. I ran up to the fence. I says: "Leave that for me, Pa. I'll do it. I'm just a little late."

"I see you are," says Pa. He turned and looked at me. His eyes danced fire. "What in th' world has kept you so? Why ain't you been here to help me with this work? Make a gentleman out'n one boy in th' family and this is what you get! Send you to high school and you get too onery fer th' buzzards to smell!"

I never said anything. I didn't want to tell why I was late from school. Pa stopped scattering the bundles of fodder. He looked at me. He says: "Why are you gettin' in here this time o' night? You tell me or I'll take a hickory withe to you right here on th' spot!"

I says: "I had to stay after school." I couldn't lie to Pa. He'd go to school and find out why I had to stay. If I lied to him it would be too bad for me.

"Why did you haf to stay attter school?" says Pa.

I says: "Our biology class went on a field trip today. Six of

us boys broke down a cherry tree. We had to give a dollar apiece to pay for the tree. I didn't have the dollar. Professor Herbert is making me work out my dollar. He gives me twenty-five cents an hour. I had to stay in this afternoon. I'll have to stay in tomorrow afternoon!"

"Are you telling me th' truth?" says Pa.

"I'm telling you the truth," I says. "Go and see for yourself."

"That's jist what I'll do in th' mornin'," says Pa. "Jist whose cherry tree did you break down?"

"Eif Crabtree's cherry tree!"

"What was you doin' clear out in Eif Crabtree's place?" says Pa. "He lives four miles from th' County High School. Don't they teach you no books at that high school? Do they jist let you get out and gad over th' hillsides? If that's all they do I'll keep you at home, Dave. I've got work here fer you to dol"

"Pa," I says, "spring is just getting here. We take a subject in school where we have to have bugs, snakes, flowers, lizards, frogs and plants. It is biology. It was a pretty day today. We went out to find a few of these. Six of us boys saw a lizard at the same time sunning on a cherry tree. We all went up the tree to get it. We broke the tree down. It split at the forks. Eif Crabtree was plowing down below us. He ran up the hill and got our names. The other boys gave their dollar apiece. I didn't have mine. Professor Herbert put mine in for me. I have to work it out at school."

"Poor man's son, huh," says Pa. "I'll attend to that myself in th' mornin'. I'll take keer o' 'im. He ain't from this county no-how. I'll go down there in th' mornin' and see 'im. Lettin' you leave your books and galavant all over th' hills. What kind of a school is it nohow! Didn't do that, my son, when I's a little shaver in school. All fared alike too."

"Pa, please don't go down there," I says. "Just let me have fifty cents and pay the rest of my fine. I don't want you to go down there! I don't want you to start anything with Professor Herbert!"

"Ashamed of your old Pap, are you, Dave," says Pa, "atter the way I've worked to raise you! Tryin' to send you to school so you can make a better livin' than I've made."

I thought once I'd run through the woods above the barn just as hard as I could go. I thought I'd leave high school and

home forever! Pa could not catch me! I'd get away! I couldn't go back to school with him. He'd have a gun and maybe he'd shoot Professor Herbert. It was hard to tell what he would do. I could tell Pa that school had changed in the hills from the way it was when he was a boy, but he wouldn't understand. I could tell him we studied frogs, birds, snakes, lizards, flowers, insects. But Pa wouldn't understand. If I did run away from home it wouldn't matter to Pa. He would see Professor Herbert anyway. He would think that high school and Professor Herbert had run me away from home. There was no need to run away. I'd just have to stay, finish foddering the cattle and go to school with Pa the next morning.

The moon shone bright in the cold March sky. I finished my work by moonlight. Professor Herbert really didn't know how much work I had to do at home. If he had known he would not have kept me after school. He would have loaned me a dollar to have paid my part on the cherry tree. He had never lived in the hills. He didn't know the way the hill boys had to work so that they could go to school. Now he was teaching in a County High School where all the boys who attended were from hill farms.

After I'd finished doing my work I went to the house and ate my supper. Pa and Mom had eaten. My supper was getting cold. I heard Pa and Mom talking in the front room. Pa was telling Mom about me staying in after school.

"I had to do all th' milkin' tonight, chop th' wood myself. It's too hard on me atter I've turned ground all day. I'm goin' to take a day off tomorrow and see if I can't remedy things a little. I'll go down to that high school tomorrow. I won't be a very good scholar fer Professor Herbert nohow. He won't keep me in atter school. I'll take a different kind of lesson down there and make 'im acquainted with it."

"Now, Luster," says Mom, "you jist stay away from there. Don't cause a lot o' trouble. You can be jailed fer a trick like that. You'll get th' Law atter you. You'll jist go down there and show off and plague your own boy Dave to death in front o' all th' scholars!"

"Plague or no plague," says Pa, "he don't take into consideration what all I haf to do here, does he? I'll show 'im it ain't right to keep one boy in and let the rest go scot-free. My

boy is good as th' rest, ain't he? A bullet will make a hole in a schoolteacher same as it will anybody else. He can't do me that way and get by with it. I'll plug 'im first. I aim to go down there bright and early in the mornin' and get all this straight! I aim to see about bug larnin' and this runnin' all over God's creation huntin' snakes, lizards, and frogs. Ransackin' th' country and goin' through cherry orchards and breakin' th' trees down atter lizards! Old Eif Crabtree ought to a-poured th' hot lead into 'em instead o' chargin' six dollars fer th' tree! He ought to a-got old Herbert the first one!"

I ate my supper. I slipped upstairs and lit the lamp. I tried to forget the whole thing. I studied plane geometry. Then I studied my biology lesson. I could hardly study for thinking about Pa. "He'll go to school with me in the morning. He'll take a gun for Professor Herbert! What will Professor Herbert think of me! I'll tell him when Pa leaves that I couldn't help it. But Pa might shoot him. I hate to go with Pa. Maybe he'll cool off about it tonight and not go in the morning."

Pa got up at four o'clock. He built a fire in the stove. Then he built a fire in the fireplace. He got Mom up to get breakfast. Then he got me up to help feed and milk. By the time we had our work done at the barn, Mom had breakfast ready for us. We ate our breakfast. Daylight came and we could see the bare oak trees covered white with frost. The hills were white with frost.

"Now, Dave," says Pa, "let's get ready fer school. I aim to go with you this mornin' and look into bug larnin', frog larnin', lizard and snake larnin' and breakin' down cherry trees! I don't like no sicha foolish way o' larnin' myself!"

Pa hadn't forgot. I'd have to take him to school with me. He would take me to school with him. I was glad we were going early. If Pa pulled a gun on Professor Herbert there wouldn't be so many of my classmates there to see him.

I knew that Pa wouldn't be at home in the high school. He wore overalls, big boots, a blue shirt and a sheepskin coat and a slouched black hat gone to seed at the top. He put his gun in its holster. We started trudging toward the high school across the hill.

It was early when we got to the County High School. Professor Herbert had just got there. I just thought as we walked

up the steps into the schoolhouse: "Maybe Pa will find out Professor Herbert is a good man. He just doesn't know him. Just like I felt toward the Lambert boys across the hill. I didn't like them until I'd seen them and talked to them, then I liked them and we were friends. It's a lot in knowing the other fellow."

"You're th' Professor here, ain't you?" says Pa.

"Yes," says Professor Herbert, "and you are Dave's father?"

"Yes," says Pa, pulling out his gun and laying it on the seat in Professor Herbert's office. Professor Herbert's eyes got big behind his black-rimmed glasses when he saw Pa's gun. Color came into his pale cheeks.

"Jist a few things about this school I want to know," says Pa. "I'm tryin' to make a scholar out'n Dave. He's the only one out'n eleven youngins I've sent to high school. Here he comes in late and leaves me all th' work to dol He said you's all out bug huntin' yesterday and broke a cherry tree down. He had to stay two hours attter school yesterday and work out money to pay on that cherry tree! Is that right?"

"W-w-why," says Professor Herbert, "I guess it is."

He looked at Pa's gun.

"Well," says Pa, "this ain't no high school. It's a damn bug school, a lizard school, a snake school! It ain't no damn school nohow!"

"Why did you bring that gun?" says Professor Herbert to Pa.

"You see that little hole," says Pa as he picked up the long blue forty-four and put his finger on the end of the barrel. "A bullet can come out'n that hole that will kill a schoolteacher same as it will any other man. It will kill a rich man same as a poor man. It will kill a man. But attter I come in and saw you, I know'd I wouldn't need it. This maul o' mine could do you up in a few minutes."

Pa stood there, big, hard, brown-skinned and mighty beside of Professor Herbert. I didn't know Pa was so much bigger and harder. I'd never seen Pa in a schoolhouse before. I'd seen Professor Herbert. He always looked big before to me. He didn't look big standing beside of Pa.

"I was only doing my duty," says Professor Herbert, "Mr. Sexton, and following the course of study the state provided us with."

"Course o' study!" says Pa. "What study? Bug study? Varmint study? Takin' youngins to th' woods. Boys and girls all out there together a-galavantin' in the brush and kickin' up their heels and their poor old Ma's and Pa's at home a-slavin' to keep 'em in school and give 'em a education!"

Students are coming into the schoolhouse now. Professor Herbert says: "Close the door, Dave, so others won't hear."

I walked over and closed the door. I was shaking like a leaf in the wind. I thought Pa was going to hit Professor Herbert every minute. He was doing all the talking. His face was getting red. The red color was coming through the brown, weather-beaten skin on Pa's face.

"It jist don't look good to me," says Pa, "a-takin' all this swarm of youngins out to pillage th' whole deestrect. Breakin' down cherry trees. Keepin' boys in atter school."

"What else could I have done with Dave, Mr. Sexton?" says Professor Herbert. "The boys didn't have any business all climbing that cherry tree after one lizard. One boy could have gone up the tree and got it. The farmer charged us six dollars. It was a little steep, I think, but we had to pay it. Must I make five boys pay and let your boy off? He said he didn't have the dollar and couldn't get it. So I put it in for him. I'm letting him work it out. He's not working for me. He's working for the school!"

"I jist don't know what you could a-done with 'im," says Pa, "only a-larruped 'im with a withel That's what he needed!"

"He's too big to whip," says Professor Herbert, pointing at me. "He's a man in size."

"He's not too big fer me to whip," says Pa. "They ain't too big until they're over twenty-one! It jist didn't look fair to me! Work one and let th' rest out because they got th' money. I don't see what bugs has got to do with a high school! It don't look good to me nohow!"

Pa picked up his gun and put it back in its holster. The red color left Professor Herbert's face. He talked more to Pa. Pa softened a little. It looked funny to see Pa in the high school building. It was the first time he'd ever been there.

"We're not only hunting snakes, toads, flowers, butterflies, lizards," says Professor Herbert, "but, Mr. Sexton, I was hunting dry timothy grass to put in an incubator and raise some protozoa."

"I don't know what that is," says Pa. "Th' incubator is th' new-fangled way o' cheatin' th' hens and raisin' chickens. I ain't so sure about th' breed o' chickens you mentioned."

"You've heard of germs, Mr. Sexton, haven't you?" says Professor Herbert.

"Jist call me Luster if you don't mind," says Pa, very casual like.

"All right, Luster, you've heard of germs, haven't you?"

"Yes," says Pa, "but I don't believe in germs. I'm sixty-five years old and I ain't seen one yet!"

"You can't see them with your naked eye," says Professor Herbert. "Just keep that gun in the holster and stay with me in the high school today. I have a few things I want to show you. That scum on your teeth has germs in it."

"What," says Pa, "you mean to tell me I've got germs on my teeth!"

"Yes," says Professor Herbert. "The same kind as we might be able to find in a living black snake if we dissect it!"

"I don't mean to dispute your word," says Pa, "but damned if I believe it. I don't believe I have germs on my teeth!"

"Stay with me today and I'll show you. I want to take you through the school anyway. School has changed a lot in the hills since you went to school. I don't guess we had high schools in this county when you went to school."

"No," says Pa, "jist readin', writin' and cipherin'. We didn't have all this bug larnin', and findin' germs on your teeth and in the middle o' black snakes! Th' world's changin'."

"It is," says Professor Herbert, "and we hope all for the better. Boys like your own there are going to help change it. He's your boy. He knows all of what I've told you. You stay with me today."

"I'll shore stay with you," says Pa. "I want to see th' germs off'n my teeth. I jist want to see a germ. I've never seen one in my life. 'Seein' is believin',' Pap allus told me."

Pa walks out of the office with Professor Herbert. I just hoped Professor Herbert didn't have Pa arrested for pulling his gun. Pa's gun has always been a friend to him when he goes to settle disputes.

The bell rang. School took up. I saw the students when they marched in the schoolhouse look at Pa. They would grin

and punch each other. Pa just stood and watched them pass in at the schoolhouse door. Two long lines marched in the house. The boys and girls were clean and well dressed. Pa stood over in the schoolyard under a leafless elm, in his sheepskin coat, his big boots laced in front with buckskin and his heavy socks stuck above his boot tops. Pa's overalls legs were baggy and wrinkled between his coat and boot tops. His blue work shirt showed at the collar. His big black hat showed his gray-streaked black hair. His face was hard and weathertanned to the color of a ripe fodder blade. His hands were big and gnarled like the roots of the elm tree he stood beside.

When I went to my first class I saw Pa and Professor Herbert going around over the schoolhouse. I was in my geometry class when Pa and Professor Herbert came in the room. We were explaining our propositions on the blackboard. Professor Herbert and Pa just quietly came in and sat down for awhile. I heard Fred Wurts whisper to Glenn Armstrong: "Who is that old man? Lord, he's a rough-looking scamp." Glenn whispered back: "I think he's Dave's Pap." The students in geometry looked at Pa. They must have wondered what he was doing in school. Before the class was over, Pa and Professor Herbert got up and went out. I saw them together down on the playground. Professor Herbert was explaining to Pa. I could see the outline of Pa's gun under his coat when he'd walk around.

At noon in the high school cafeteria Pa and Professor Herbert sat together at the little table where Professor Herbert always ate by himself. They ate together. The students watched the way Pa ate. He ate with his knife instead of his fork. A lot of the students felt sorry for me after they found out he was my father. They didn't have to feel sorry for me. I wasn't ashamed of Pa after I found out he wasn't going to shoot Professor Herbert. I was glad they had made friends. I wasn't ashamed of Pa. I wouldn't be as long as he behaved.

In the afternoon when we went to biology Pa was in the class. He was sitting on one of the high stools beside the microscope. We went ahead with our work just as if Pa wasn't in the class. I saw Pa take his knife and scrape tartar from one of his teeth. Professor Herbert put it under the lens and adjusted the microscope for Pa. He adjusted it and worked awhile. Then he says: "Now, Luster, look! Put your eye right

"Don't do that," says Professor Herbert. "It's all on me."

"We don't do things like that," says Pa. "We're just and honest people. We don't want somethin' fer nothin'. Professor Herbert, you're wrong now and I'm right. You'll haf to listen to me. I've larned a lot from you. My boy must go on. Th' world has left me.. It changed while I've raised my family and plowed th' hills. I'm a just and honest man. I don't skip debts. I ain't larned 'em to do that. I ain't got much larnin' myself but I do know right from wrong attter I see through a thing."

Professor Herbert went home. Pa and I stayed and swept one hour. It looked funny to see Pa use a broom. He never used one at home. Mom used the broom. Pa used the plow. Pa did hard work. Pa says: "I can't sweep. Durned if I can. Look at th' streaks o' dirt I leave on th' floor! Seems like no work a-tall fer me. Brooms is too light 'r somethin'. I'll jist do th' best I can, Dave. I've been wrong about th' school."

I says: "Did you know Professor Herbert can get a warrant out for you for bringing your pistol to school and showing it in his officel They can railroad you for that!"

"That's all made right," says Pa. "I've made that right. Professor Herbert ain't goin' to take it to court. He likes me. I like 'im. We jist had to get together. He had the remedies. He showed me. You must go on to school. I am as strong a man as ever come out'n th' hills fer my years and th' hard work I've done. But I'm behind, Dave. I'm a little man. Your hands will be softer than mine. Your clothes will be better. You'll allus look cleaner than your old Pap. Jist remember, Dave, to pay your debts and be honest. Jist be kind to animals and don't bother th' snakes. That's all I got agin th' school. Puttin' black snakes to sleep and cuttin' 'em open."

It was late when we got home. Stars were in the sky. The moon was up. The ground was frozen. Pa took his time going home. I couldn't run like I did the night before. It was ten o'clock before we got the work finished, our suppers eaten. Pa sat before the fire and told Mom he was going to take her and show her a germ some time. Mom hadn't seen one either. Pa told her about the high school and the fine man Professor Herbert was. He told Mom about the strange school across the hill and how different it was from the school in their day and time.